



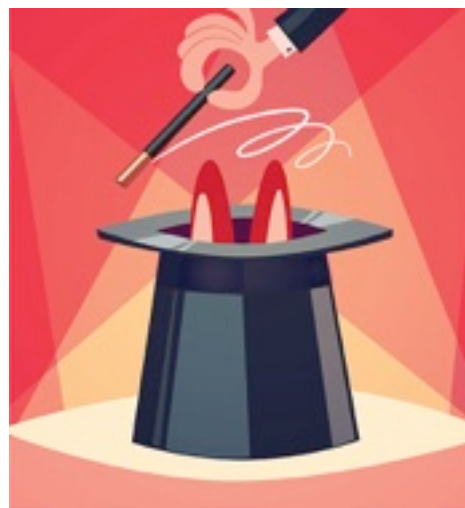
I remember, as a kindergartner, setting up a lemonade stand in front of our house. When kind or thirsty patrons would stop and buy a cup, they'd hear me say, "Before I give you your lemonade . . . a magic trick!"

At age 7, in my own way, I was able to hold these confused, unsuspecting folks hostage for a few moments as their cars idled in the driveway. I would then launch into five minutes of an over-rehearsed spiel, typically culminating in a dozen red-foam rabbits springing from my tiny hands onto the ground. It was like the bunnies were trying to escape my shenanigans as well.

And so it began.

At age 8, I built a makeshift radio station in the hallway of my house, broadcasting to a listening audience of one: my dog Clancy, also the silent sidekick on my Mr. Microphone-fueled imaginary radio show.

By 9 years old, I'd begun memorizing Steve Martin routines. I couldn't wait for my parents to have people over. Anyone would do, but bridge groups and parties were the best because they meant a bigger audience.



Out came the milk crates, with a blanket draped over them for a makeshift podium. I'd step up with a broomstick as a microphone and claim center stage, where I'd repeat, verbatim, a comedy routine I'd lifted from a Steve Martin cassette tape. No doubt the laughter that followed came not in response to my great talent,



but to the awkwardness of some very inappropriate jokes being spoken by a kid who obviously did not understand at all what he was saying.

But they laughed.

And a voice deep inside me whispered, "This is what you are meant to do." Not yet 10 years old, I knew what my passion was. Nearly four decades later, I find myself blessed to visit and speak to audiences across the United States and beyond, using comedy to provoke thought, to promote kindness, and to celebrate the diversity of others. I enjoy a passionately satisfying career finding the funny that surrounds us in life, and mixing it all into a message that makes people smile, laugh and feel good about who they are and their part in their family, school, career or community. My favorite part of what I do is helping people rediscover and reconnect to their passions.

Notice, I did not say discover their passions, but *rediscover*. I personally believe there are things we are born to love. Careers we are born to follow. Lives we are born to live . . . passionately. Seeking to plug into your passion? Here are some things to consider:

- 1 What are your life double-take moments? What are some images, professions, words or ideas that when you read about them or hear them mentioned in the media you just have to double back to learn more?
- 2 If you could have your own version of Freaky Friday and swap lives with anyone, who would that be? Who is someone whose life you would like to experience?
- 3 As a very young child, what did you enjoy doing? What did you pretend, read about, want to know more about and dream about?
- 4 If you knew you were absolutely guaranteed to succeed—that failure was not a possibility—what would you choose to do?



- 5 If you were independently wealthy, so you didn't need to earn a living from your work, how would you spend your days?

When you're in your passion, you're fueled, you're energized. You're the best you, the real you. Celebrate it.

And make sure you always stop for the lemonade-stand magician on the side of the road. Be kind to the people you have the privilege of encountering each day. Kindness and validation, wherever you offer it, always make a difference. Your smile may be the sign that causes someone's own inner voice to whisper, "This is what you were meant to do."

*Kevin Wanzer is a professional speaker. But not just any speaker ... he's not what you think. His program empowers his audience—one laugh at a time. If you have never experienced him share his passion on stage, you owe it to yourself to make that happen. Kevin Wanzer spends his days traveling to countless college campuses sharing his rip-roaring comedic antics and spreading his message on love, laughter and leadership. He is the ideal speaker for greek leadership events, new-student orientations, all campus programs focusing on celebrating the differences of others through collegiate journey and beyond or conducting his diversity workshop for student leaders or college and greek housing units. Connect with Kevin on Twitter @KevinWanzer (and @TheMoreYouNope for ridiculous untrue information) or at [KevinWanzer.com](http://KevinWanzer.com) for information on bringing Kevin to your speaking event.*

